

Gravity Hill

Volume IX



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Catherine Stumberg, Editor

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Ted Wojtasik, *Advisor*

Cover Art
Lucas Apolinario

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Editor's Note

I would first like to thank everyone who has contributed their talent to *Gravity Hill*. This could not have happened without all of your submissions. A special thank you to those (you know who you are) whom I pestered endlessly to send me work. It is much appreciated, and this ninth issue of the literary magazine has profited from a great group of writers and artists. The poetry, fiction, and artwork in this edition represent the amount of talent that we have in this community, and I am proud to have been able to give your hard work the attention it deserves.

An especially sincere thank you goes to Dr. Ted Wojtasik, who has been nothing but a great help to me during my semesters at St. Andrews. It was truly an honor to be chosen as editor this 2012-2013 school year, and I have enjoyed it immensely.

Cate Johnson also deserves a shout out for helping me with the publishing side of being editor, and for patiently teaching me how to use Quark, which has a mind of its own.

Lastly, I'd like to recognize the winners of the writing awards this year:

Marie Gilbert Award
Mike Iannuzzi
"Appalachian Nights"

Nancy Bradberry Award
Amelia DiPillo
"Madsong"

Editor's Choice Award
Kendall Pickard
"The Rain Goes"

It has been a great year for *Gravity Hill*, and I sincerely hope you all will continue to send submissions to the future editors, for whom I wish both motivation and luck.

Catherine Stumpey, Editor

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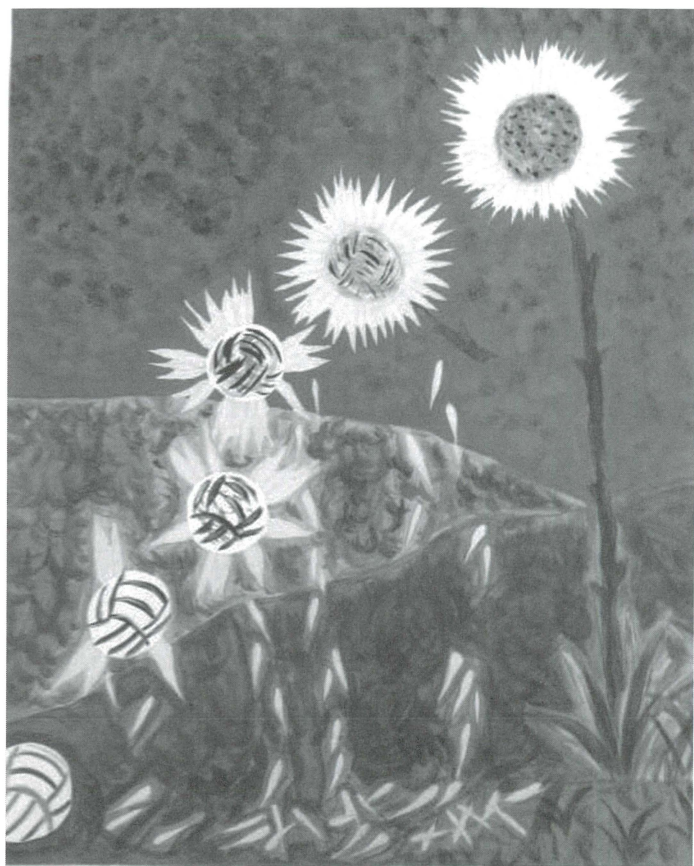
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*art submissions



Untitled
Sierra Agrella

Open Heart Surgery

Tara Algieri

God, did I want to love you—
Once briefly in a bed of ice.
To make sure that my heart would
Survive for a transplant
Into the chest of another.

My professor lectured one day
About smell and memory.
Whenever I smell whiskey,
My mind boomerangs to you—
Drunk off cheap liquor.

You felt so safe once—
Muscles and felonies.
Now every time we go out—
It's drunkards and punches.
You're so passionate about the wrong.

It will all be mended though.
And at least I know you can hit.
But just because your smile
Makes old women blush,
Doesn't make it sweet.

Let Me Know

let me know if you're not into it
want something else
or hate my guts.
love you

Cool Lava

Seth Brown

the
love
I have for
lava lamp
is so great, I
stare at it so
often it's crazy.
Most of the time
I don't even think
about it. It just hap-
pens. Please get me
through this work,
I ask it all the time.
And never has it
failed me
of which
I am so proud.
I only hope it never
goes out on me, I don't
know what I would ever do

Night of All Nights

Nusra Chatman

When you reach a certain age in life you begin to think that you're too old for certain things. Cartoons, video games, goofing around, and other activities enjoyed as children soon turn into actions that are just flat-out immature. Halloween is one of those activities. I never thought I would celebrate Halloween after high school.

Prior to the party, my friends had always tried to convince me to attend campus parties. Being a commuter student, it had always been difficult to participate in campus activities. Because of this, I would usually just stay home and learn about what occurred from others. Knowing that I was more than likely going to decline attending the Halloween party, those very same friends apparently decided enough was enough. Ganged up on is pretty much the only way I could describe what was done to me that day. Throughout the day, I was practically showered with numerous persuasions from my friends, each one sounding more enticing than the last.

“Come on! It'll be fun!”

“There's gonna be booze!”

“If you're not gonna drink then come watch us get drunk off our asses!”

Eventually, I was won over by these persuasions and decided to go. This was the first time I had celebrated Halloween since I was twelve. This was also the first party I'd been to since I'd been in college. The decision to go was made on the day of the party, so you could imagine the anticipation I was feeling. Excite-

ment, fear, curiosity, all these emotions bundled up in one tight ball inside me. It was quite the sensation.

Preparations that I thought were going to be tedious and hastily put together had actually fallen into place quite nicely. Opening my closet, I came across a beautiful red sorceress costume a neighbor had given me years before. Accompanying it was a black hood held together by a red plastic brooch. The dress itself was form-fitting and sleeveless. *Risqué* was the best way to describe it. I never had envisioned myself wearing such a thing, but after trying it on I was pleased. I look pretty good! I thought to myself. Who thought dressing up could be so much fun?

Preparations didn't end there, however. When I returned to campus, I went straight to the dorms. I met many new and interesting faces. It was odd meeting these people knowing that I probably wouldn't remember them in the morning. I was told that they were having a pre-party, which I could only assume meant drinking before the actual party. As I walked along the halls, I would occasionally see others holding a bottle of beer. Not being a big fan of drinking, I settled for a nice cup of lemonade. As I began to fathom how people could drink so much in one night, I was pulled away to be introduced to the residents of the dorm. One in particular (Stacy...I think) was impressed with my costume. "Oh my gosh!" and "You look amazing" were among her compliments. Honestly, I didn't think it was that impressive.

"I can make it better! Follow me!" she said in the most energetic voice I had ever heard. (Is this what alcohol does to people?) I was dragged into her room in an instant.

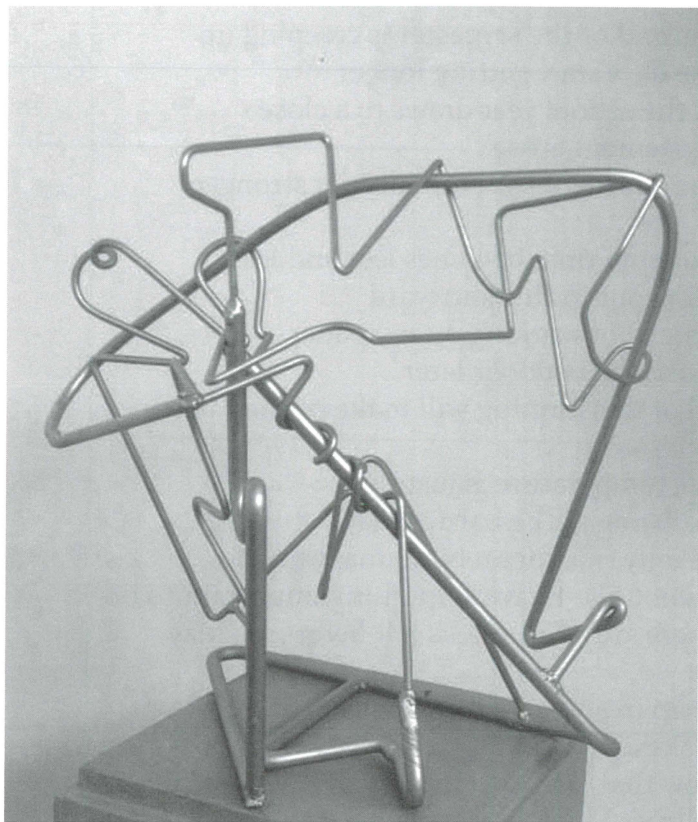
I was a bit skeptical at first. I hadn't a clue to what was going on inside of her head. What else could I possibly do to make it better? She went scavenging around the room until she came across a black bag. I watched as she poured out its contents. Small containers filled with colorful material were splayed haphazardly across her bed. Make-up? I thought to myself. After her find, I was forced to sit down on the floor as she worked her magic. Since I was not accustomed to wearing make-up, this task took longer than I wanted. It was a foreign sensation. My face felt heavy and slightly uncomfortable. In contrast, the make-up artist was enjoying herself. After she finished, I took a look into the mirror. The discomfort was well worth it. Stunning was the word that came to mind. White eye shadow along with blush that adorned my cheeks truly brought out the elements of my costume. I looked like an actual sorceress! After the make-up session we sat around the room talking and occasionally laughing at a poor soul who had obviously had too much to drink as we waited for the real party to begin.

The pre-party lasted for about an hour, so many people were already intoxicated by the time the actual party began. Surprisingly, this didn't seem as bad as I thought it would be. The dorm was filled with laughter and mischief that was only going to intensify throughout the night.

The party took place in a rather reclusive building. To be honest, I didn't know it had existed until then. The outside wasn't very interesting, the walls looked worn out and the building itself was pretty small. People were lined up for an ID inspection. Lining up, I had a chance to get a glimpse of the inside. It was

dark, casting a flash of light every now and then. My curiosity had reached its breaking point. I couldn't wait any longer!

The inside was a total contrast to the outside. Flashing lights flickered at a rapid pace that matched the movements on the dance floor. Loud techno music pounded in my ears, its fast rhythm mimicking my heartbeat. The setting defined every meaning of the word *adrenaline*. A DJ was there casting words to increase the hype of the party, though it was not needed. Robots danced with Playboy bunnies while ghosts danced with hula girls. People dressed incognito were crammed together in one large dance. Now that was a very entertaining sight! So many people packed in a tight space dancing around each other never did seem as fun as it did that night. As I danced the night away, emotions that had built up burst inside of me. I let loose and made that night a Halloween to remember.



Line Drawing (sculpture)
Keith Davis

Madsong

Amelia DiPillo

The end of the semester is creeping up
The days start getting longer
As the school year draws to a close
Excitement arose
The cheers of the students got stronger

Studying time becomes less and less
Lying out in the courtyard
Instead of working on my paper
Guess I'll just do it later...
All of this tanning will make passing hard

The temperature is just right
For being at the barn all day
I'll only ride for an hour, maybe two
It's not like I have something important to do
There are a few weeks left before it's May

Sleep in and skip my classes
Wake up and shotgun a beer
Now that I've got a nice buzz
At least I look like everyone else does
Looks like I'll be a super senior next year...

I Like Eggs (Katuata)

André Ellerbe

I like eggs

I love them scrambled

Where are your panties?

Five Years (Kyoka)

Ashleigh Fritter

Five years
I believe
The shit he tells me
Just to find out
He tells it to Amanda too

Dear Wine

Jen George

Dear Wine,
I'm on cloud nine
With you I like to dine
You are the utmost divine
On February fourteenth, please be mine
A glass of you, I'll feel just fine
Fresh from a grape vine
Common sense decline
Bed, recline

Drunken Nights (Haiku)

Vanessa Giacomini

Drunken nights
Regretful mornings
Coyote ugly

Infatuation (Senryu)

Infatuation

Known to make me fall

Like a leaf on a cold day

Isle of Skye, Scotland 1720

Jim Hartsell

Wringing of earthy, calloused hands
Clutching a weathered leather pouch
Guarding the blood, sweat and tears of toil
Seeking confirmation of a clansman's word,
Hearts guarding hope, eyes envisioning
An untouched wilderness beyond

Uncertain backward gazes, as smoke circles magically
Above hearths of stone cottages perched
Upon a smooth brush of green highlands
A rainbow sky, an omen of promise
Reflects upon rhythmic waves of azure lochs
Rolling against smooth bows of wooden vessels.

Crashing upon shore, floods of doubt, resolute faith.
The mysterious deep, that churning, tossing of destinies
Rolling tides, pungent with primeval richness,
The herring, the kelp, the dry sweat,
Upon docks and decks, men wrestling nets and rope
Hands toughened by their dominion tasks.

Now cramped, dark, damp, cold- in this "wooden crate,"
Muscles drawn hot like bowstrings,
Visions of morning saunters down peaceful glen,
Stretching out upon the rock of solace at dawn,
Dreaming like someone longing for home, for heaven,
for Caledonia.

Where one stands firm upon rocky ledges of Kintail,
Its endless horizons, eternally hopeful in God's
Providence.

Yet dark blue plains still roll in every direction, spewing,
Like a breathing hungry beast, roaring angrily as
winds howl

Crashing viciously against this vulnerable floating bark
Now a den for rat-like creatures, empty stomachs,
Still aching, churning amid stench, filth, spoilage,
Whimpers of helpless infants, and fervent prayers of
saintly mothers.

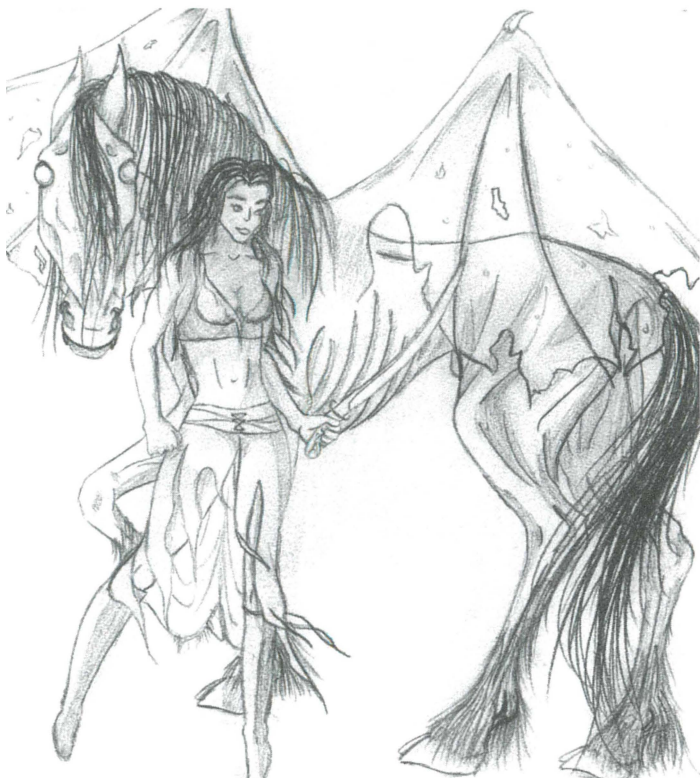
Though surviving the dark night, shadowed day's
glorious light

Jubilant cries rouse pitiful creatures from nightmares
Revealing brothers, neighbors, clansmen.

Glimpse of hope still within, clamoring gingerly,
Crowding the deck, feasting eyes upon the sight.

As in our most hopeful dreams, forested lands across
distant horizons;

And beyond: the valley of Cape Fear, the Carolina
sandhills, our New Caledonia!



I'hestral
Holly Hickman

Sushi

Whitney Hill

Black, white and rolled,
Some served hot, some cold.
Crab, avocado and rice,
It grew up around my life.
Held by sticks,
Long and thick.
Dipped in soy,
For all to enjoy.

Appalachian Nights

Mike Iannuzzi

Ephemeral connections and nothing lasts
Time and time again waves of emotion flow
Like Marmalade's streams in the summer heat
Thinking of you often while covering vast land
Many months, *esattamente sei mesi*
Fevered summer days turn to frigid winter nights
Unlike the changing of seasons are my feelings for you

Memories of Appalachian nights spent on rooftops
Contemplating the future and what I can't control
We watched the blossoms of the dogwoods
Blow from north to south and east to west
And I have tried to keep them from falling.

I Pass You Every Day (Tanka)

I pass you every day, you never say hi
I try to give you a smile but you walk on by
Friday nights filled with sloppy texts from you
What am I supposed to do
We only talk when you're drunk

Dim Lights and White Wine (Tanka)

Katelee Johnson

Dim light and white wine
 hands on the table
 intertwined
 I smile at you
 your eyes on mine

Plymouth Breeze

She had a Massachusetts license plate
A Plymouth Breeze sedan in the Bay State
I was almost 17, got my license, couldn't wait

For a '99 she was a very smooth ride
Black dash, black seats, purple on the outside
Not a fancy car, but she filled me with pride

The Breeze was my boombox, big sound
She brought us to parties, she drove us around
She smoked and drank and danced, but she never left
the ground

The Other Day (Villanelle)

Sophie Kasian

The other day I walked away
Out of the darkness and into the light
Don't let others lead you astray

Close that chapter; move on the the next day
Always keep your eyes open, beautiful sight
The other day I walked away

It is better to run than just lay
Face your problems with a fight
Don't let others lead you astray

Letting it tear you apart like a fray
Set yourself free and fly like a kite
The other day I walked away

Who said that they have to have the last say
Let there always be some brightness in your night
Don't let others lead you astray

You are wonderful, beaming like a ray
Turn it all around, don't give them the right
The other day I walked away
Don't let others lead you astray

Please Don't Say Goodbye (Haiku)

Please don't say goodbye
Look me in the eyes and lie
Like you always do

A Footprint (Haiku)
Dalton Marshall

A footprint left here
The deer was in a hurry
Running away quick



Untitled
Stuart Marshall

God's Gift to Mankind

Chris Parker

A cross, a
symbol of
Christ's love.
A gift from
God above,
if he had not done it, where would we be?
Upon a tree, he bled for me. He loosed the
chains and set me free. A price that no one
else would pay
but He rose on
the third day.
Now He's alive
and now we
must rejoice.
The King has
Risen, Amen!

Liberty

Kendall Pickard

When I was nine,
Freedom terrified me.

Independence Day meant I was
Cowering in the window

Face pressed against the glass
In bone numbing awe.

Pop

Bang

Whistle

Fizzle.

Each sparkling explosion caused my heart to

Jump

Stutter

Throb

Clench.

Until the humiliated tears came.
What was liberty to a sobbing child?

The Rain Goes

The rain goes
Plop

Plop

On a cold tin roof.
Inside, lovers move to the beat
Of the irregular liquid drum

The Graceful Egret

Vincent Pugh

The graceful egret
Slowly lurks through the water
Are you going to eat your cornbread?

About Those Tattoos

Andrea Ramirez

Something always triggers the idea of a tattoo. For me, it was seeing my Aunt get one for my Grandfather. We were on a bit of a road trip to Wilmington. The plan was to lay out on the beach, shop, and have a good time, just me and her. One day, while we were walking downtown looking at the shops she spotted a tattoo shop and decided we should go inside. At that point in my life the idea that I could get a tattoo had never crossed my mind.

Going inside the tattoo shop changed my life. It opened my eyes to the beauty of skin art. This was my tattoo introduction. From the moment my Aunt got her tattoo until when I got mine two years later, the idea was constantly in the back of my mind. For some people, when the idea is triggered they immediately act on it, but for me it was something I knew would affect the rest of my life and I had to be sure I knew what I wanted and that it had meaning behind it. I know people who can get tattoos that have no meaning but have no regrets, but I believe that each tattoo should be a well-thought-out choice with meaning behind it. My first tattoo held my religious beliefs. My second and third had a religious side to them but they also represented one of the best times in my life, which was my trip to Italy.

Finding the right artist for my tattoo was important to me. People should go to someone they feel comfortable with and also like his or her work. Just because someone has looked through an artist's photo album of previous tattoos doesn't necessarily mean that he or she

would like that person's work on them forever.

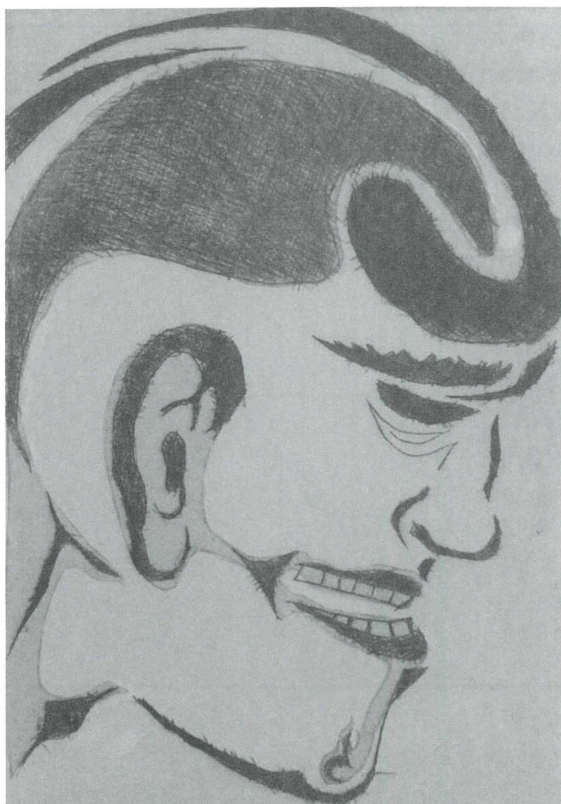
When I got my first tattoo, I went with my best friend to check out a local place. The man we met upon entering was nice but said he was booked full for a few weeks and that he had a relatively high rate per hour. He informed us that there was a newer artist who didn't charge as much but still did good work. We found his book and looked it over—I was amazed by his work. This was very important to me. A tattoo should always be quality over quantity and price. I met with the guy and explained my idea. He told me he would draw up something for me and we scheduled my tattoo for a week later. I was confident that he would give me an amazing tattoo to be proud of. If I had thought he would not do a good job, I would never have given him my business.

The day finally came for me to change my body forever. I was very nervous, my palms were sweaty, and my heart was beating fast. I knew I wanted this very much but had no idea how much it was going to hurt or if I was actually going to be able to handle it. The scariest part of my tattoo was the moment when the artist had the gun poised over my skin and I was waiting for him to start. I heard the buzzing of the machine in my ear like a bee and I sat there tense, waiting for the sting. After the initial test to make sure I could handle it was over, the real fun began. It was a stinging pain like a bee but at some point my skin went numb. At first, I got really warm and the pain was all that mattered. Then the numbness began to take over and I cooled down and focused on the sound of the gun and the feel of the needle dragging across my skin. There were certain times when the needle would hit a nerve and I

could feel it all the way down my arm. The spine was the worst. When the needle was working on the skin over my spine, I could feel it throughout most of my body. There was a moment when the gun stopped where I let out the breath I had been holding for a while and let my body relax so I wouldn't jerk when he started again. In that moment of relaxation I heard the sound of the spray bottle as he sprayed a paper towel with alcohol. Then there was the sting of the alcohol as he wiped it across my freshly scraped skin. While the skin was still burning, the buzz began again and a new level of pain was added. When the tattoo was finally done and he wiped the whole thing down with alcohol, he sent me away covered in ointment and wrapped up like leftovers. I could finally relax and breathe easy again. The climax of my story was the eight hours I spent sitting backwards in a rolling computer chair while my beliefs were etched into my skin with needles.

The resolution to every good story would tie everything together. Well, this resolution kept all the ink in my skin. The first three days after having my new tattoo, I had to wash it and put Aquaphor ointment on it three times a day. I used non-scented antibacterial soap to wash it. After the third day, I used non-scented lotion for at least a week to keep the tattoo moisturized and I couldn't scratch or pick at it. The top couple of layers of skin were peeling by this point and I had to let them come off on their own and try to keep my tattoo as moisturized as I could.

When all of that was said and done, I had a permanent piece of art on my body. Whether it is a saying that I treasure or a portrait of my beliefs in one mesh of images, I treasure my tattoos for the masterpieces they are.



Old Man
Brian Shanks

Hardship

Chuck Solan

Up and down, the boat sways
like the rock of a swing,
five rods waiting to bend
as if under the stress of a final test.
Crack...one rod breaks under the pressure,
leaving the crew in a frenzy.
Calm down.
There's more fish to catch.

The Wait (Haiku)

Laying on the deck
One eye open, waiting...click
Here we go, "FISH ON!"



Iears
Cat Stumberg

Sierra Agrella
Tara Algieri
Seth Brown
Nasra Chatman
Keith Davis
Amelia DiPillo
André Ellerbe
Ashleigh Fritter
Jen George
Vanessa Giacomini
Jim Hartsell
Holly Hickman
Whitney Hill
Mike Iannuzzi
Katelee Johnson
Sophie Kasian
Dalton Marshall
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\$5.00

